

WASHINGTON – Today's AAA report indicating that gas prices in Connecticut are the highest in the lower 48 states is no surprise to Connecticut families who face real pain at the pump every time they fill up. To help reduce gas prices for consumers in Connecticut – and across the country –

Congressman John Larson (CT-01) again implored Republicans in Congress to stop working to block new powers under last year's Wall Street Reform legislation to crack down on excessive and abusive oil speculation.

"It's an unfortunate coincidence that as we mark the one-year anniversary of the signing of Wall Street Reform into law, AAA released a report indicating Connecticut has overtaken California as the home to the highest gas prices in the lower 48 states," Congressman Larson said. "We have heard time and again from financial experts and industry leaders that excessive and abusive oil speculation is causing consumers pain at the pump. Yet, Republicans in Congress continue to turn the other way and delay the implementation of provisions from Wall Street Reform that are designed to rein in speculators and save consumers money. It's time we put the American people before speculators and Big Oil."

In addition to delaying the implementation of Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) provisions aimed at preventing abusive oil speculation, Republicans recently voted to cut \$30 million from the group's budget.

According to an April 2011 analysis by Goldman Sachs, unregulated speculation adds over \$20 per barrel to the price of oil. Additionally, since 1990 the number of oil speculators has more than doubled with their percentage of the market growing from 30 percent then to nearly 70 percent today. Last May five oil speculators were charged with manipulating the markets during the height of 2008's record gas prices.

Additionally during a recent Senate hearing on oil tax subsidies, Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson admitted that a barrel of oil should cost \$60-\$70 based solely on supply and demand.

In addition to supporting President Obama's decision to tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, Congressman Larson also supports other steps to cut energy costs for Americans:

- Adopting a “use it or lose it” policy for oil companies sitting on untapped oil fields.
- Creating an independent inspector general to oversee the oil industry.
- Fully fund the CFTC so it can monitor for excessive and abusive oil speculation.
- Ending taxpayer funded subsidies for Big Oil

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